The House reassembled at twelve of the clock,

MR. CHAIRMAN in the Chair.

INTRODUCTION OF MINISTERS

THE PRIME MINISTER (DR. MANMOHAN SINGH): Hon. Chairman, Sir, with your permission, I wish to introduce to you, and, through you, to this august House my colleagues who have been inducted in the Council of Ministers recently.

1. Dr. M. S. Gill, Minister of State (Independent Charge) of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports.
2. Shri V. Narayanasamy, Minister of State in the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs and in the Ministry of Planning.
3. Shri Santosh Bagrodia, Minister of State in the Ministry of Coal.
4. Shri Raghunath Jha, Minister of State in the Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises.
5. Dr. Rameshar Oraon, Minister of State in the Ministry of Tribal Affairs.
6. Shri Jyotiraditya Madhavrao Scindia, Minister of State in the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology.
7. Shri Jitin Prasada, Minister of State in the Ministry of Steel.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Waiving of loans by banks

†321. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:
SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that due to non-repayment, loan amount to the tune of Rs. 60,000 crores has been waived off by Government and private banks in the country during the last five years;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the amount waived off by banks in the country during 2002-2003 to 2006-07, year-wise; and

(d) the quantum of this waived off amount which pertains to the corporate sector, agriculture sector and retail loan sector?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (c) The banks write off amounts in non-performing asset (NPA) accounts in accordance with their board approved policies and Reserve Bank of India (RBI) guidelines, either as part of compromise settlement with the borrowers or where the debt has been classified as a 'loss' asset. The details of amount written off by public and private sector banks during the last five years are as under:—

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(Rs. in crore)

Sl. No.	Bank Group	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07 (R)	Grand Total
1	Public Sector Banks	9,448	11,308	8,102	8,833	9,423	47,114
2	Private Sector Banks	1,412	1,635	2,056	1,892	1,850	8,845
	TOTAL	10,860	12,943	10,158	10,725	11,273	55,959

(d) The existing Management Information System of RBI does not maintain sector-wise data of amounts written off in NPAaccounts. However, the data obtained from Public Sector Banks regarding the amounts written off by them during the last five years pertaining to corporate sector, agriculure sector and retail loan sector is as under:—

(Rs. in crore)

Sector	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	Grand Total
Corporate Sector	4,739	5,561	2,622	4,449	3,161	20,532
Agriculture Sector	980	1,308	520	697	931	4,436
Retail Loan Sector	1,927	2,666	1,934	1,631	2,456	10,614
TOTAL (Data provisional)	7,646	9,535	5,077	6,777	6,548	35,582

Coal Bed Methane Policy

*322. SHRI MAHMOOD A. MADANI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the salient features of the Coal Bed Methane Policy 1997;

(b) the details of blocks awarded tor the exploration and production;

(c) the basis of awarding such blocks;

(d) whether the exploration in all the blocks have been completed;

(e) if so, the details of the blocks, capacity-wise; and

(t) in how many blocks commercial production has started and how is it being utilized?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA): a) to (f) Government of India approved Coal Bed Methane (CBM) Policy in 1997 to harness the resource of CBM gas in the country. Implementation commenced in 2001 by offering CMB blocks in first round of CBM policy. Till date, three rounds of CBM policy have been concluded. The salient features of CBM policy are given at Statement *(See* below).

Under this policy, Government of India has awarded 23 CBM blocks to Indian and foreign companies on equal terms and conditions through international competitive bidding system i a transparent manner. In addition to 23 CBM blocks, Government of India had also awarded blocks on nomination basis to Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) and Coal